

Fact Sheet

FINAL AIR TOXICS REGULATION FOR OFF-SITE WASTE AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued on July 1, 1996 (61 FR 34140) a final rule to reduce air toxics emissions from specific types of facilities that receive certain wastes, used oil, or used solvents from off-site locations for storage, treatment, recovery, or disposal at the facility. Air toxics are those pollutants that are known or suspected of causing cancer or other serious health effects.

The final rule is intended to address uncontrolled air toxics emissions from those waste management and recovery operations that are not subject to air standards under other source categories for which the EPA already has or is planning to develop MACT standards.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS?

EPA's final rule will reduce emissions of air toxics, including benzene and methylene chloride, by about 43,000 tons annually, representing an 82 percent reduction from current levels. Benzene is a known human carcinogen and methylene chloride has been linked to increases in cancer incidence and other adverse health effects.

EPA's final regulation will also reduce nationwide volatile organic compound emissions by about 51,000 tons per year, representing an 82 percent reduction from current levels. VOC emissions contribute significantly to the formation of ground-level ozone (smog), which can lead to acute and chronic human respiratory effects, as well as crop damage.

BACKGROUND

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA is required to regulate emissions of 189 listed toxic air pollutants. On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industries and activities that emit one or more of these air toxics, commonly called the source category list. For listed activities that are "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons annually or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that will require the application of stringent air pollution controls, known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT).

The July 16, 1992 source category list comprised the industries and activities for which EPA intends to issue regulations to reduce the emissions of hazardous air pollutants (HAP). The activities on this list were selected based on EPA's estimate of the potential harm to human health and the environment from hazardous air pollutant emissions generated at these facilities.

The category for this final rule was originally titled "solid waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities," but was changed for the proposed rule to better describe the activities regulated by the standards.

WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE FINAL RULE?

EPA estimates that there are approximately 750 off-site waste and recovery operation facilities nationwide. Of those, EPA believes that approximately 250 facilities may be subject to today's final rule. New off-site waste and recovery facilities built in the future will also be subject to EPA's final rule.

The off-site waste and recovery operations source category includes hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities (TSDF), commercial wastewater treatment facilities, used oil recovery facilities, and certain other facilities that provide waste management or spent materials recycling services.

Landfills, publicly-owned treatment works, incinerator units, drum re-conditioning operations, and site remediation activities are not subject to this rule. EPA may develop air toxics standards for these activities under other source categories, but they are not included in today's final rule.

WHAT DOES EPA'S FINAL RULE REQUIRE?

EPA's final regulation requires specific air emission controls for affected tanks, containers, surface impoundments, process vents, and equipment leaks.

The final rule is based on a combination of equipment and operation standards and work practice standards. Specific requirements for monitoring, record keeping, and reporting are specified in the regulation.

To ensure that affected facilities are not subject to duplicative requirements under the air toxics program, any affected unit or emissions point that already is operating air emission controls in compliance with another MACT standard (such as the final NESHAP for synthetic organic chemical manufacturers or the "HON," or for petroleum refineries) is considered in compliance with today's final rule.

HOW MUCH WILL THE FINAL RULE COST?

EPA estimates that the nationwide annual cost of the final rule will be \$18 million, and the nationwide capital cost will be \$42 million. These estimates include the costs of monitoring, record keeping, and reporting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Interested parties can download the signed and published rule and other technical information from EPA's web site on the Internet from the following addresses:
(<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/rules.html>)

(<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/eparules.html>)

voice help line (919) 541-5384.

Any questions regarding the applicability or rule determinations for this final rule should be directed to the appropriate regional contact, as follows:

Region Phone EPA Regional Contacts

I: (617)565-3587 Susan Lancy

II: (212)637-4023 Umesh Dholakia

III: (215)566-2150 Walter Wilkie

IV: (404)562-9131 Lee Page

V: (312)886-6793 Bruce Varner

VI: (214)665-7439 Barry Feldman

VII: (913)551-7637 Tony Petruska

VIII: (303)312-6971 Heather Rooney

IX: (415)744-1187 Nikole Reaksecker/Kingsley Adeburo/1177

X: (206)553-6641 Doug Hardesty/Andrea Longhouse/8760

For technical questions about the regulation, contact Elaine Manning of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5499.